The Times-Dispatch

PUBLISHED DAILY AND WEEKLY AT THE

TIMES-DISPATCH BUILDING.

BUSINESS OFFICE, NO. 016 EAST MAIN STREET.

Entered January 27, 1903, at Richmond, Va., as second-class matter, under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

Washington Bureau: No. 216 Colorado Building, Fourteenth and G Streets, Northwest.

Manchester Bureau: Carter's Drug Store, No. 1102 Hull Street.

Petersburg Headquarters: J. Beverley Harrison's, No. 109 North Sycamore Street.

The DAILY TIMES-DISPATCH is sold at 2 cents a copy.

The SUNDAY TIMES-DISPATCH is sold at 5 cents a copy.

The DAILY TIMES-DISPATCH, including Sunday, in Richmond and Manchester, by carrier, 12 cents per week or 50 cents per month.

THE TIMES-DISPATCH, Richmond, Va.

BY MAIL.	One Year.	Six Mos.	Three Mos.	One Mo.
Daily, with Sun....	$5.00	$2.50	$1.25	50c
Daily without Sun..	3.00	1.50	.75	25c
Sun edition only...	2.00	1.00	.50	25c
Weekly (Wed.)...	1.00	.50	.25	—

All Unsigned Communications will be discarded.

Rejected Communications will not be returned unless accompanied by stamps.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 1905.

Regulation of Commerce and the Adoption of the Constitution.

The regulation of railroad rates by Congress is a question that is now occupying a conspicuous place in the minds of the business men of the country, who, either from their sensitive interest in railroads, or from their ideas of the centralizing tendency of the exercise of such a power by Congress, have become alarmed at the prospect of a control by Congress of the railroad rates in interstate commerce.

It is an interesting fact that this particular question—the control of commerce, both foreign and interstate—was the principal influence that drew the thirteen sovereign and independent States of the old confederation into the closer and more perfect union created by the Constitution of the United States. The story of how it came to pass is worth telling.

Under the old Articles of Confederation, adopted in 1777, it was provided in Article II that each State should retain its sovereignty, freedom and independence, and every power, jurisdiction and right not by the confederation expressly delegated to the United States in Congress assembled.

Article IV provided that "the people of each State should have free ingress and egress to and from any other States and should enjoy therein all the privileges of trade and commerce, subject to the same duties, impositions and restrictions as the inhabitants thereof respectively. * * * Provided also that no impositions, duties or restrictions shall be laid by any State on the property of the United States or either of them."

Article V provided among other things that "no State should lay any imposts or duties which might interfere with any stipulations in treaties entered into by the United States in Congress assembled."

Article VIII provided "that the revenues of the United States were to be supplied by the several States in proportion to the value of all land within each State, and the taxes for paying that proportion should be left by the authority of the Legislature in the several States."

Under this condition of the confederation the Revolutionary War was fought out to successful finish and peace made. It was on April 30, 1784, that Congress took up a report of a committee, of which Mr. Jefferson was a member, and adopted a series of resolutions which contained the following:

"Unless the United States, in Congress assembled, shall be vested with power competent to the protection of commerce, they can never command reciprocal advantages in trade. * * *

"Hence it is necessary that the States should be explicit and fix on some effectual mode by which foreign commerce not founded on principles of equality may be restrained.

"That the United States may be enabled to secure such terms, * * * it be and hereby is recommended to the Legislatures of the several States to vest the United States in Congress assembled for the term of fifteen years with power to prohibit any goods, wares or merchandise from being imported into or exported from any of the States in vessels belonging to or navigated by the subjects of any power with whom these States shall not have formed treaties of commerce, etc."

The resolutions of which these were a part were sent to each State, and on March 31, 1786, nearly two years afterwards, the matter was again taken up by Congress, and the committee, of which Mr. Grayson, of Virginia, was a member, reported that in examining the law passed by the States in consequence of the act of April 30, 1784, they found that four States, namely, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Virginia had enacted laws conforming to the recommendations contained in the act, but had restrained their operation until the other States should have substantially complied, and that three States, namely, Connecticut, Pennsylvania and Maryland, had passed the law conforming to the same, but fixed several times at which the act was to begin to take effect; that New Hampshire passed the enabling act, but with a suspending proviso, while Rhode Island granted the power for a term of twenty-five years, BUT ALSO TO REGULATE TRADE BETWEEN THE RESPECTIVE STATES. North Carolina passed an act similar to that of Rhode Island, but also clogged with a provisional clause, and the three other States, namely, Delaware, South Carolina and Georgia, as far as heard from, had passed no law at all."

Congress resolved again that the recommendations of the 30th of April, 1784, be again sent back to the States with the request, most earnestly pressed, that the States should grant the powers exactly as they were asked, and the matter then laid over until September 20, 1786, when the delegates from Georgia presented an act giving the authority asked for by Congress, passed the 2d of August, 1786. On October 23, 1786, a committee, of which Mr. Henry, of Virginia, was a member, presented another series of resolutions touching the matter of regulation of commerce, and again earnestly recommending to the Legislatures of the States of New Hampshire and North Carolina to reconsider their acts and pass them conforming with the resolutions of the 20th of April, 1784, so as to enable, on their part, the United States in Congress assembled to exercise the powers thereby invested as soon as possible.

Meantime, on the 13th of July, 1785, a committee of Congress, of which Mr. Monroe, of Virginia, was a member, presented a report recommending "that the first paragraph of the ninth article of confederation be altered so as to read thus: 'The United States in Congress assembled shall have the sole and exclusive right and power of determining on peace and war, except in the cases mentioned in the sixth article; of sending and receiving ambassadors, entering into treaties and alliances; OF REGULATING THE TRADE OF STATES, AS BETWEEN WITH FOREIGN NATIONS AS WITH EACH OTHER, &c.'"

In the House of Delegates of Virginia, on the 30th of November, 1785, Mrs. Alexander White reported resolutions, understood to have been prepared by Mr. Madison, declaring "that it is the opinion of this committee that the delegates representing this Commonwealth in Congress be instructed to propose in Congress a recommendation to the States of the Union to authorize that assembly to regulate their trade on the following principles and under the following qualifications, etc."

On the next day, December 1, 1785, the motion to carry these resolutions to the Virginia Senate, which had been adopted, was rescinded, and the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole and laid the whole report on the table.

On the 21st of January, 1786, the House of Delegates of Virginia, appointed commissioners, of which Edmund Randolph, St. George Tucker, James Madison, Jr., and George Mason, Esquires, were members, to meet such commissioners as might be appointed by other States in the Union, at a time and place to be agreed on, to take into consideration the trade of the United States, to examine the relative situation and trade of other States, to consider how far a uniform system in their commercial regulations might be necessary to their common interests and their permanent harmony, and to report to the several States such an act as would, when unanimously ratified by them, enable the United States in Congress assembled effectually to provide for the same, etc.

Pursuant to the invitations which were sent out under these resolutions, commissioners for the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Virginia met at Annapolis, Md., on September 11, 1786, the commissioners from Virginia being Edmund Randolph, James Madison, Jr., and St. George Tucker. After discussing the matter for several days the commissioners from the States represented, on the 14th of December, 1786, adopted a letter or address to the Legislatures of their respective States, which was also sent to Congress and to all the the other States, setting forth the exigencies of the occasion and the great difficulty with which they had been confronted, and the fact that the commissioners appointed from the States of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and North Carolina had not attended, and that no commissioners, as far as they knew, had been appointed at all from the States of Connecticut, Maryland, South Carolina or Georgia, and that in the absence of so many States they did not conceive it advisable to proceed on the business of their mission; that the magnitude and importance of the object demanded that speedy measures be taken to effect a general meeting of the States in a future convention, for the same and other purposes, as the situation of public affairs might require; that the idea of extending the power of the deputies to such convention to other objects than those of commerce, which had been adopted by the State of New Jersey, was an improvement on the original plan and deserved to be incorporated into that of a future convention; "that the power of regulating trade is of such comprehensive extent and will enter so far into the general system of the Federal government, that to give it efficacy and to obviate questions and doubts concerning its precise nature and limits, may require a corresponding adjustment of the other parts of the Federal system."

The commissioners, therefore, proposed to each State "the appointment of commissioners to meet at Philadelphia on the second Monday in May next (1787), to take into consideration the situation of the United States, to devise such further provisions as shall appear to them necessary to render the Constitution of the Federal government adequate to the exigencies of the Union."

It was in accordance with these recommendations that the Federal convention which adopted the Constitution of the United States assembled in Philadelphia in May, 1787.

It appears then that the necessity for regulating trade, both foreign and interstate, was the moving cause for the abandonment of the old articles of confederation, which in their terms were perpetual and the adoption of the present Constitution.

There seems to have been but little debate upon the question that Congress should have the exclusive power "to regulate commerce with foreign nations and among the several States and with the Indian tribes." Indeed, it is the third of the eighteen provisions in section 8, showing how highly its importance stood in the estimation of Congress. It is an interesting fact that on August 18th among the provisions which were proposed to be incorporated in this section, was one that Congress should have the power "to regulate stages on the post roads." This provision was not included, as doubtless it was supposed to have been sufficiently covered in the general provision to regulate commerce between the States.

The full force and effect of this provision of the Constitution to regulate commerce between the States seems to not to have been appreciated by the several States, and New York undertook to give some exclusive rights of navigating the waters within the jurisdiction of that State with boats moved by steam to Robert R. Livingston and Robert Fulton. This created a clash with the citizens of New Jersey, and caused the celebrated case of Gibbons-Ogden, reported in Ninth Wheaton, and in deciding the case, the court, presided over by Chief Justice Marshall, settled the question of the exclusive power of Congress over the subject by deciding "that the power to regulate commerce extends to every species of commercial intercourse between the United States and among foreign nations and among the several States; that this power to regulate commerce is the power to prescribe the rules by which commerce is to be regulated, and like all other powers invested in Congress, it is complete in itself. It may be exercised to its utmost extent, and has no other limitations than such as are prescribed in the Constitution." Other expressions only amplified the exclusive and all-absorbing power of Congress over the subject as to interstate commerce, but not as to commerce entirely within the jurisdiction of any one State.

Numerous decisions have followed the case of Gibbons vs. Ogden, but all of the same tenor. It is plain, therefore, that the power of Congress to regulate railroad rates in interstate commerce is unquestionable. The only question is how far it is wise to do so, and what are the safest means of exercising this power, so as to produce the greatest good to the people and to run the least risk to the purity of the government and the liberty of the people from the exercise of such an enormous centralizing power.

We have given so much space to this brief history of this subject, because it must interest every American to know the fact that the regulation of commerce was the fundamental cause of the adoption of the American Constitution.

Richmond and the State Library.

We would say to the News Leader that The Times-Dispatch has no objection to testing public sentiment on the library proposition by popular vote or otherwise. But we think it would be a bad precedent to take a vote, and there is no convenient way of doing so, except at some regular election. We might take a "straw vote" at any time, but it would be expensive and no vote of the people under any conditions would be legally binding upon the Council. As for the State Library, we submit the following reasons why that institution is not adequate to the demands of Richmond:

1st. The State Library does not aim to secure the books sought by the average citizen; its resources are taxed to the uttermost in the purchase of books which from their very nature are intended for use in the library and cannot be taken away, such as encyclopedias and the like.

2d. It has not the space for seating the people who desire library privileges; and who would use them in the study of some definite subject.

3d. It aims only to keep a single copy of its books and for the purpose of the State Library this is sufficient. For the use of teachers in the public and private schools; of men desiring to pursue a specified course of reading in connection with their calling; of skilled mechanics desiring recent literature along the lines of their work, the supply of books is not only meagre and never allows a duplicate, but there is no intention of attempting to supply this demand. To give to the operatives of our factories such books as would fit them for advance in their profession is not only beyond the scope of the State Library, but would justly arouse criticism from other parts of the State, that the State funds were being used for the benefit of Richmond to the detriment of the other localities more needy and equally entitled to consideration.

4th. The money to be expended by the State for the purchase of books is being used to improve a most excellent nucleus for a reference library, and to complete sets broken, and now to be completed only at great cost. It is quite out of the question to ask that books of inestimable present value, but of necessarily ephemeral use, such as recent text books for children, popularizations of scientific works, and books intended to familiarize children with the great thoughts of the greatest thinkers of all ages, should be purchased by the library designed by the State to be repository of her records, the dignified center to which all may come, and from which all her children may draw draughts of deep learning.

5th. The State Library has a very limited force of employes (five in all); it is quite impossible to furnish the service necessary for attention to the wants of readers. Already the difficulty of giving proper attention to those who ask in the reading room for books or information is causing a serious difficulty in doing the work required for the State at large. When the interests of the city and the State conflict, the State Library must neglect those of the city, and that this point has been reached has been officially stated by the librarian.

6th. The laws governing the circulating of books forbid them to all except State officials and those recommended by such officials. The number allowed to each official to recommend for the use of books is two. That many more persons desire this privilege than can be accommodated is a matter of daily experience in the State Library, we are told, and the necessity for refusing this is one of the painful duties of the employes.

7th. If anybody is competent to speak as to the ability of the library to accomplish the work of a free city library, surely it must be the librarian of the State Library. He has stated officially before the Finance Committee of the Council that his work is sadly handicapped by the need for a city library, and he is ready to reiterate this statement and to amplify it at any time. Either the State librarian does not know the needs of his library, or he is unable and unwilling to serve the public, or else his statements, often repeated, that he is suffering for the co-operation of a city library, must be accepted as final on this point.

More than this, the State Library does not belong to Richmond, and we have no voice in its management. Richmond should have a library of her own. She needs it—not for the rich, who are able to buy books, but for the poor, who must get them from a public library, or not at all.

Swanson's Announcement.

We print in to-day's paper a card from Hon. Claude A. Swanson, member of Congress from the Fifth District, announcing his candidacy for the Democratic nomination for Governor of Virginia, subject to decision of Democratic voters in the State primary election, to be held next year.

Mr. Swanson's announcement is manly and straightforward. He is in favor of the primary plan of selecting candidates; he is in favor of building up the public school system and of improving the public highways; he is in favor of developing the State's agricultural interests and of all measures that will tend to promote intelligence, public morals and the material welfare of Virginia. Mr. Swanson was trained in the public schools of the rural districts, and after his graduation from college taught a country school. This gives him familiarity with the needs of such schools, and he says that if elected Governor, he would give special care and attention to this subject.

We may remark just here that it is a most hopeful sign that a distinguished candidate for office should emphasize, as an appeal to the voters, the fact that he is a champion of the cause of popular education. It shows that popular education is a popular issue in State politics. Mr. Swanson also emphasizes that he will in no way pledge himself in advance to any person or persons for any position or appointment within the gift of the Governor, and that if elected he will in no way be embarrassed, but will be entirely free to select the best men for the service, from members of the Corporation Commission down.

Mr. Swanson has made a most useful member of Congress, and in his canvass for the gubernatorial nomination he bore himself well and took his defeat like a man.

In giving prominence to Mr. Swanson's announcement, The Times-Dispatch does not mean, of course, to commit itself in any way to his candidacy, for it has no candidate, and will have none, until the Democratic party shall have made its selection. But it is gratifying to know that each one of the gentlemen who have formally entered the race is qualified and fit to fill the high position, and we feel sure that the campaign will be conducted upon the highest plane of statesmanship and good manners.

American Opera.

Mr. Savage has demonstrated that there is a field in America for English opera, and we confess to some pride that Richmond has shown such commendable appreciation of his work, and of the splendid music which his American artists have given us. It is notable that a city of Richmond's proportions should have furnished a large and brilliant and thoroughly appreciative audience for each of the four performances. It is a tribute to the culture and refinement of our people.

In all ages and among all nations men and women have loved music in one form or another. But all men and women do not love the highest order of music. There are still unappreciative counterparts of poor old Polonius, who are for a jig or they sleep. There are others, however, who, like Thoreau, are not stirred by jigs and rag-time, but quiver when they hear the classics. It is all a matter of cultivation. When we learn to appreciate the best literature and the best music, we can find no satisfaction in trash. Nor is it necessary to be a musician in order to appreciate and enjoy good music, any more than that it is necessary to be a poet in order to appreciate and enjoy good poetry. If the people become accustomed to the best, they will learn to love it, and music organizations like our Wednesday Club and seasons of grand opera, such as we enjoyed last week, are doing much to cultivate the popular taste and raise the standard.

Richmond is indebted to Mr. Savage for the festival of music he has given us, and to the management of the Academy of Music for bringing the company here.

On Wednesday evening of this week, Richmond is to have another musical treat. Mme. Szumowska-Adamowska, the great Polish pianiste, will give a recital at the Academy of Music. She enjoys the distinction of being the only pupil of Paderewski and won the favor of that great artist because of her wondrous talent. She is a pianiste of the first rank, and those who hear her will hear, we are led to believe, the perfection of piano music. In her recital she will be assisted by Mrs. Hoffman-Huss, soprano, who is said to have a voice of rich tone and high culture. Such artists should draw a large audience in this musical center.

The Heart Softening of the Critics.

A glance over the field of modern journalism brings one in suitably to the conclusion that, so far as current literature is concerned, the gentle art of criticism is falling into inocuous desuetude. The critical faculty, through want of exercise and superinduced fatty degeneration, is being done to death. Its old stamping grounds know it no more. In the make up of the paid reviewer, where of all spots we have the right to look for it, its place is nowadays occupied by a kindly and softened heart, and a hat full of laudatory adjectives.

In criticism, as in everything else, there are, of course, fashions. In days gone by, authorities were wont to hold that if you could find nothing pleasant to say about a book, you must not say anything at all about it; and again, in other times it was urged that if you could not put your hand upon a volume good enough to be worthy of notice, you could at least select one that was bad enough. The modern drift is towards a glorification of the first of these theories. The discreet silence formerly maintained in the presence of a publisher's weakling is to-day joyfully shattered by a hail of encomium. Any powers of discrimination that may be part of his native endowment, having been carefully chloroformed, the critic's sole remaining business, now is to say something handsome about every book that is published. In these days there is scarcely anything written so bad that there is none to do it reverence. A merely average book is welcomed from the presses with a regular anvil chorus of praise, which breaks out in spots into ardent enthusiasm. The result is something like chaos. Superlative qualities which might be applicable to a Shakespeare are handed out with cheerful impartiality, to every magazine poet. The stamp of respectful appreciation just appropriate for a Thackeray is eagerly impressed upon a Jones or a Smithson. For the truly great one, who may yet turn up some day, we hold nothing in reserve. When he finally comes there will be nothing to say about him which has not been already said a hundred times about everybody else.

The trouble with all this is not that it misleads the public, which, whatever you say to it, is pretty likely in the end to follow his own bent, but that it stultifies the author and stagnates him. Over and above his duty to the reader the critic has a further, and perhaps a higher duty to the writer. He should always stimulate him, forever goad him on to larger endeavors and better things. He should score him, scold him, pick holes in him. By showing him, gently, but firmly, where he has failed to make good, he supplies, as it were, a pole for a higher leap on a subsequent essay. By pointing out his errors, he helps to readjust the range for the next shot. By pricking the writer's pride, he stiffens his determination. But, unhappily deprived of any such stimulus, the modern author, having reached a facile success and much bowing down before what is pleasantly called his genius, is content, naturally enough, to drift inertly along on the tide of popular favor. Recollecting the exalted things that have been said about him, we must not be surprised that he doesn't see with his own eyes that his bark is unseaworthy, and his course toward oblivion. But is it hoping for too much to ask that some frank and discriminating soul from the shore, equipped with the Gatling gun of critical knowledge, should blow a hole in the flimsy craft, and set the complacent fellow to scrambling again?

In their moments of depression, our critics are wont to pull long faces over the fact that no books are being written nowadays that have in them the qualities of life. As long as everybody is perfectly delighted with the substitute, however, why break our backs in straining for the real? What, as a clever observer recently suggested, is there left for an author to try for who is already told that he is "superb"?

The V. P. I. Cadets.

Thus far but few members of the junior class of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, who left the institution in December, have been notified whether or not they will be permitted to return. Complaint has been made to us that the boys are kept so long in suspense, and the complaint seems reasonable. The boys should be notified one way or the other, at the earliest possible moment.

"Obedience."

(Selected for The Times-Dispatch.)

"The angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying: Arise and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word. * * * And when he arose he took the young child and his mother by night and departed into Egypt." St. Matthew, ii: 13, 14.

Joseph knew neither the danger the child was in nor how to escape it, but God made the way plain before him. Joseph had great honor put upon him in being the guardian of the blessed virgin, but that honor had trouble attending it, as all honors have in this world. We now see how God had provided for the "young child and his mother" in appointing Joseph to take care of them, and how the gold brought by the wise men would help them meet their expenses.

God foresees the distress of His people and provides against them beforehand. The journey would be perilous and inconvenient to both these tender charges, and they were but poorly provided for it. Yet Joseph made no objection, nor did he delay to obey the command. As soon as he received his orders he immediately arose and went away by night—the same night, it would seem, that he was told by the angel. Those who would make sure work of their obedience must make quick work of it. His simple duty was to obey, and nobly did he discharge it.

God is in continual communication with the right minded. He speaks to them in words, in visions and in dreams. He speaks to them by starry eloquence. He speaks in an hundred ways. He is a God nigh at hand to those who turn to Him, in whose heart rises the vehement desire to know His will.

He will be as near to us as our desire is pure; the fire of our earnestness will be, as it were, the measure of His readiness to give us guidance and defense.

Sometimes obedience requires activity. The angel said "arise and flee." That is the easiest part of obedience; no difficulty about fleeing. The blood heats, and then activity is a delight. God Himself puts these calls for action into our life at some given time, and with them the right measure of appointment.

When that illness attacked in your own home, and death stole into the family circle, carrying off the pride and stay, you would have died but that you were compelled to attend to the last sad rites. God is good and kind, even in these matters. For in the midst of your intolerable agony you must bestir yourself, for in that effort there lies salvation.

After action comes patience. The full message of the angel was: "And be thou there until I bring thee word." That is the hard part of life. In climbing the mountains, passing through the wilderness or daring dangers, one finds comparative pleasure, for there is a joy in activity. But to sit down where I am told to sit, and not to stir till the angel comes back again—who can do this? I inquire of all I see how can I get away out of this Egypt? For disobedient soul that I am, I try in every way to be off, so fond am I of activity and self-direction, and so impossible is it for me to sit still and wait to see the outworking of the divine will.

There are times of retreat in every great life. Christ must be driven into Egypt, Moses banished to Horeb; John the Baptist must dwell in the desert, and Saul of Tarsus is sent to Arabia—all placed by God in a safe and helpful retreat. There are times when we are not to be found. An asylum need not be a tomb; retreat need not be extinction.

For a time you are driven away; make the best then of your leisure. It is a time to gather up strength, to examine the foundations of belief, to recall the mercies of the way, and to locate the guiding of His providence; to be still in His keeping, awaiting His command.

You want to be at the front, and instead you are banished to the rear. You want to work in the vineyard, and you are laid on a bed of pain and weakness. But it is all ordered by God and for some good and wise purpose. Help Him to fulfill that purpose.

Gather strength; let the brain sleep and the busy fingers rest; yield up yourself to the quietness of God, and after what appears to thy dull eyes, wasted time or unprofitable waiting, there shall come an inspiration into thy soul to make thee strong and fearless—to do or to suffer for the will of God.

So many reports have come from Port Arthur concerning the real conditions there that the Kansas City Journal is held blameless for mixing its figures as follows: "General Stoessel's noble little army of 5,000 men, which withstood the assaults of ten times as many Japanese, was gradually decimated until a month ago it numbered only 17,000. Since then scurvy and eleven-inch shells made such terrible havoc that when the end finally came, only 24,000 were left to surrender."

We knew that "The Gisto," by Miss Cassie Moncure Lyne, of Richmond, was a fine book, and we are gratified to hear that the orders exceed the supply. The book now goes into its second edition of 4,000. It is a pleasure to note the success of Richmond authors.

The Chicago Tribune, one of the greatest newspapers in the country, and unalsotently Republican, speaks right out in meeting as follows:

"Another good way to solve the 'race problem' down South might be to let the South do the solving."

Live politicians never retire from politics. These new year retirements we have been reading about were by those who were already laid out.

To say the very least of it, Richmond would be very unkind to refuse to assist Mr. Carnegie in accomplishing his laudable purpose to die poor.

The paragraphers on the Mexican papers are anticipating great fun. The Mexican government has just decided to establish a weather bureau.

There is a suspicion that those people who were so anxious to go Nan Patterson's bail had a tip in advance and knew they would get the desired notoriety without risk.

A new law in Pennsylvania forbids children making stogies. A law forbidding grown folks to smoke them is also needed.

Another good thing about the fall of Port Arthur is the fact that the Che Foo junk line will have to go out of commission.

Nogi and Stoessel are having a good time swapping compliments, and the first thing we know they will be regular old pals.

A "square deal" is just what a lot of Federal officeholders in the South do not want. A "good" deal is what they are after.

The supposed string to Senator Hill's retirement from politics has not wiggled in sight up to the present writing.

There used to be a maxim to the effect that a real wet January in old Virginia means big crops to follow.

Richmond did pretty well under Prophet Dowie's blessing for the first few days out.

In any event, Dr. Crum will not be without a comfortable loaf of comfort.

Desert Telegraph Line.

It is not generally known that there is a telegraph across the southern desert land of the Australian continent, 2,000 miles in length. It runs partially through an unmanned country and long tracts of waterless desert. While it was being constructed more than 2,000 tons of materials had to be carried far into the interior, and many of the iron and wood poles were conveyed 400 miles. A recent report says that the wear and tear of this telegraph construction has been inconsiderable, but there is great difficulty found in supplying the stations across the desert with operators.

FROM RELIGIOUS CONTEMPORARIES

The Good Veil.

The veil, how impenetrable it is, and how close it hangs before us! Not a day, nor an hour, before us can we see. We have our probabilities and our hopes, but they are all uncertain. We know not what a day will bring forth. And it is wise and best, a thousand times, that we do not see to-morrow. We could not do the duty of to-day, nor bear its burdens nor enter into its joys, if we could see to-morrow. We would be overwhelmed, and all human life be set awry and all activity palsied. It is infinitely good that there is a veil before our eyes. —Central Presbyterian.

Children of the Kingdom.

The all-controlling idea of the kingdom of God is God pitying mankind, as a father pitieth his children, and our departing Lord in His prayer gives to His children the password to the heart of God—our Father, who art in heaven.

All the simple, self-sacrificing, lowly, child-like thoughts and feelings and aspirations that belong to early Christianity seem to have very little to do with mediaeval ecclesiasticism, with great cathedrals and ecclesiastics, with the great man after the flesh and mighty and noble. Nor does the spirit of the children of the kingdom seem to have much place since the rich and great have taken charge of matters, and the name Christian is all-embracing.—Southern Churchman.

Under Disappointment.

We need not understand, in order to believe. When the bitter disappointment comes, unexpected, unaccountable, unnecessary from all our human knowledge, and just at a time when all had been well and God had been very near, we need not try to understand why it came, before we can believe that it was well that it should come. "I could not trust a God whom I could understand," said a staunch Christian general and statesman, in loving conversation with a friend about their common Saviour. God is no farther away when the disappointment strikes; He wants to be nearer because of our greater need of Him then. The sorrow is rich with blessing, if we will let it be so. What a privilege to believe in the love and care of the Father, even when we cannot understand the workings of His love!—Sunday School Times.

The Step We See.

But the best way to remove or overcome the difficulties and mysteries inherent in religion is to accept and act on what is clear and what we do understand. If we do God's will in so far as we know it, we shall be led to know the doctrine more and more fully. He that looks upon a wild forest from an elevation some distance away may not be able to see the beaten pathway which leads all the way through it, but if he enters by the pathway and follows it along all its windings, he will be guided safely through it all. If we taste and see that the Lord is good, the intellectual difficulties will all melt away in the crucible of actual testing in experience. Take the step which we can clearly see, and then we shall see where next to place our feet.—Christian Observer.

The Son of Gladstone.

Herbert Gladstone, son of the famous English statesman and himself a man of note in public life, is about 5 feet 7 inches tall, and with his extremely boyish face might well be taken for a man of less powerful physique than he really is. As a matter of fact he is a very powerful and a very muscular man, and is able to do great feats in athletics when he likes. He inherits his strength from both his parents. They both lived almost to ninety.

Mrs. Henry B. Patterson, of No. 503 North Sixth Street, wishes to thank her many friends for their kindness and sympathy expressed in so many ways during the long illness of her husband, whose death occurred last week.

JOB PRINTING CONTRACT.

The contract for job printing for the city of Richmond has been awarded to the Charles E. Pieot Printing Company, for the year 1905. This well known firm was the lowest bidder, and the contract was awarded them over a number of competitors. This firm recently received a very complimentary letter from Professor Martin P. Burke, of Washington and Lee University, commending them for the excellent work done in turning out the 102d volume of Virginia reports.